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(3) DEMAND XXIV—CIVIL WORKS—WORKS.

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor, I move—

'*That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs.* 4,83,56,700 *under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works.*' "

MR. SPEAKER :—" Motion moved—

'That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,83,56,700 under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works.' "

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, I move—

'*That the allotment of Rs.* 4,83,56,700 *under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works be reduced by Rs.* 100.' "

MR. SPEAKER :—" Motion moved—

'That the allotment of Rs. 4,83,56,700 under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works be reduced by Rs. 100.' "

(4) DEMAND XXV—CIVIL WORKS—ESTABLISHMENT AND TOOLS AND PLANT.

THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the recommendation of the Governor, I move—

'*That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs.* 1,24,56,100 *under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishment and Tools and Plant.*' "

MR. SPEAKER :—" Motion moved—

'That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,24,56,100 under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishment and Tools and Plant.' "

1 p.m. SRI T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Sir, I move—

'*That the allotment of Rs.* 1,24,56,100 *under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishment and Tools and Plant* **be reduced by Rs.** 100.' "

MR. SPEAKER :—" Motion moved—

'That the allotment of Rs. 1,24,56,100 under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishment and Tools and Plant be reduced by Rs. 100.' "

* THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a brief statement. The bulk of the budgeted expenditure under the first

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Demand is required for road works. The existing roads and new roads to be formed in the State are classified under five categories, namely :—

(1) National Highways,
(2) State Highways,
(3) Major District Roads,
(4) other District Roads, and
(5) Village Roads.

" The general policy of the Government in regard to the roads is that important through roads which consist of National Highways, State Highways and Major District roads including the portions of such roads in municipal limits should be developed and maintained by Government and that roads of local importance which consist of other District roads and village roads should be maintained by the local bodies concerned. Accordingly, about 8,624 miles of important through roads including about 1,065 miles of National Highways are under Government and the remaining 17,301 miles of roads (including 3,321 miles of Major District roads which are yet to be taken over by the Government gradually) are under the control of District Boards. The National Highways outside municipal limits are maintained by this Government at the expense of the Government of India and the amount paid by that Government is shown under recoveries against Highways Department. The roads dealt with under this Demand are only those under the control of Government (including National Highways). The roads under the control of District Boards will be dealt with by the Hon. Minister for Local Administration under Demand XXVI.

" Although the policy of this Government is that they should directly be responsible for all roads of State importance, it has not been found possible owing to the financial stringency, to take over any portion of such roads either in 1952–53 or 1953–54. In 1954–55, 28 miles of such roads were taken over for maintenance. In 1955–56, it is proposed to take over 338 miles of such roads, involving an annual expenditure of Rs. 6·28 lakhs on their maintenance.

" In the overall five-year development plan for the State from 1951–52 to 1955–56 the Planning Commission has allotted only a sum of Rs. 3 ·57 crores for development of roads other than National Highways in this State. It is proposed under the Five-Year Plan to take up construction of 19 new bridge works at an estimated cost of Rs. 5 ·37 lakhs during 1955–56. The expenditure that is likely to be incurred on these new works in 1955–56 is Rs. 4·12 lakhs.

" A number of original works have also been taken up under the head ' Excluding Post-war Reconstruction ' (b. Communications). Some of these works are financed from the State allocations of the Central Road Fund. In 1955–56, it is also proposed

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to sanction from State funds six works estimated to cost Rs. 7·04 lakhs and a provision of Rs. 2·1 lakhs has been made towards expenditure on these works in the next year.

" As already stated by the Finance Minister in his budget speech the Government of India have agreed to give us grants amounting to about Rs. 138 lakhs for a certain number of road works of inter-State or economic importance. The Government of India have also since agreed to meet the full cost of works on the West Coast Road from the 1st April 1955. A sum of about Rs. 96·74 lakhs has been provided for these works in the budget.

" On account of financial stringency, sufficient allotment could not be made for maintenance of Government roads in 1955–56. Incidentally it may be mentioned that in order to improve the condition of roads with intensities of traffic exceeding 1,000 tons per day, the Government have permitted the Chief Engineer to utilize the annual maintenance allotment for providing dustless surface to such roads, i.e., surface dressing with precoated chips. It is hoped that this new policy will ultimately lead to a large mileage of roads being provided with such surface.

" All original works, of which the cost is less than Rs. 5 lakhs, are ordinarily included in Demand No. XXIV, while works costing more than Rs. 5 lakhs are dealt with under Demand No. ' XXXVII—81—Capital Outlay on Civil Works '. The total provision for building works under Demand XXIV is about Rs. 57 lakhs of which about Rs. 31 lakhs is required for original works and Rs. 26 lakhs for special and annual repairs to existing buildings. The provision for original works is required for continuing works which had been started in previous years, and also for taking up new works. In order to give an integrated picture of the building programme of this Government, it is necessary to refer to the provision required under Demand XXXVII also. A total sum of about Rs. 97·401 lakhs has been asked for under that Demand for continuing schemes under execution and for execution of fresh schemes sanctioned. Owing to the high cost of labour and building materials, the policy of the Government is not to sanction generally any new building, unless imperatively and inescapably necessary for carrying on the administration. So no new big building schemes are proposed to be started in 1955–56.

" The second Demand includes provision for the staff of the Public Works and Highways Departments and also for the Steam Boilers Departments. The Highways Department also attends to District Board works and necessary debit is made against the District Boards concerned in proportion to the cost of District Board works in the Division during the year. The provision made for ' Tools and Plant ' under this Demand is for the maintenance of road rollers, lorries and heavy plant and machinery in the Public Works and Highways Departments and also for the purchase of additional tools and plant required for speedy execution of works."

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* Sri T. C. NARAYANAN NAMBIAR :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, the two Demands that have been moved by the Hon. Minister for Public Works are very important ones. It is in the interests of the public that roads are laid and without means of communication nothing can be done in this age of civilization and culture. I understand that the Government of India have agreed to give grants amounting to Rs. 138 lakhs for roads of economic importance. I would ask the Hon. Minister whether in the matter of selection of roads of economic importance, the Government give their earnest consideration to all aspects. Sir, in my constituency, the condition of the roads is very bad in Talliparamba and Irikkur firkas. The Hon. Minister and hon. Members may feel why I am raising a local issue when discussing an important demand ilke this. If some roads are constructed in Talliperamba and Irikkur firkas, it will go a long way in developing the cottage industries and so many other industries in the State. The firkas are full of rich resources but for ages together they have been completely neglected.

" There is a road from Talliperamba to Irikkur and there is also a small culvert and a bridge. The bridge is in a dilapidated condition and has not been repaired for the last two years. From Irikkur to Irutti there is a bridge which is also in a dilapidated condition and no attempt has been made to repair it. The question of economic importance should be considered in selecting the roads and I would request the Hon. Minister to see that these bridges, culverts and roads are repaired in time.

" Another important matter which I wish to refer is about the pay, living conditions and status of the employees working in the Public Works Department. The lascars, the watchmen, the wiremen and drivers of motor boats are not given any living wage. Apart from that, till 1949 these lascars were given Rs. 18 as basic pay, but from 1949 their pay has been reduced to Rs. 12. In spite of several representations, no reply has been received from the Government. The lascars attached to Tahnur, Kootoi and Poora-peramba are getting only Rs. 12. They are full-time workers and as a matter of fact these workers have to be at their posts during all the 24 hours. They do not know when the boats will come. They have to raise the shutters for purposes of navigation and they are working for full 24 hours, in the literal sense of the term. I should say it is a tragedy. I would request the Hon. Minister to consider their case and see that these posts are provincialised. We all know, Sir, that Malabar is a land of rivers. Nearly about 1-10
25 to 30 motor boats are plying in my own constituency limits. p.m.
I understand that it is the Executive Engineer who gives licence for plying motor boats. But nothing has been mentioned in the conditions governing the licence with regard to the rates of wages, leave facilities, etc., of workers employed in this trade. Recently the pay of the drivers has been fixed. The wages of other workers

have not been yet determined. Apart from that, the conveniences of passengers also have not been considered at all. No platforms or sheds for the use of passengers travelling in these motor boats have been provided. Most of the boats have not at all been disinfected. The boats are maintained in a very deplorable state of affairs. So, I would request the Hon. Minister to go into this matter and see that not only workers are assured of ample remuneration but also passengers are provided with travelling facilities.

"I wish to refer to another matter with regard to collection of tolls by the Government. These tolls are collected for travelling over certain railway bridges which have been recently converted into ordinary bridges by the Highways Department. As far as my knowledge goes, there is a bridge at Balliapatta where tolls are collected and this bridge is closed for the use of the public after 9 p.m. Round about that area there are about 40 villages and even vans and cars carrying pregnant women having labour pain are not allowed to pass through the bridge after 9 p.m. till 6 a.m. the next day. I understand that even medical men have represented to the Government in this connexion. As a matter of fact, I also made representations to the Government on behalf of the All-India Kisan Sabha Conference in 1953 and I have been given a reply by the Government that the matter will be considered. Though it was nearly two years since the Government have given their reply, still the Government are considering it and nothing has been done at all. I request the Hon. Minister to be kind enough to consider that matter also.

"Another thing which I wish to mention is with regard to the deepening of the Canoli canal. It is a very important canal and it can be used for carrying merchandise to the various parts in Malabar. I would request the Hon. Minister to see that the deepening of this canal is taken up immediately so that this can be used for navigation as it was used before.

"In this connexion, I wish to point out to the Hon. Minister one other matter. I find every year Government sanctioning estimates for a large number of works. They have sanctioned estimates for a large number of schemes in 1952. 1953 and 1954. When I came first to this Assembly three years ago—before I came here, I was an agitator and a worker like most of the hon. Members—and when huge Budget books containing 500 and 600 pages were given to me, I was under the impression that all the proposals contained in those Budget books would be implemented because they had been sanctioned by the Government. But I am surprised to find that many of these schemes have not been implemented at all. Even this year ,the Government have sanctioned a number of schemes. But there is no guarantee that all these schemes will be implemented this year itself. With regard to the Headquarters Hospital and the Hospital for Women and Children

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at Kozhikode, nothing has been done though allotments have been made during the last two years' Budgets. Similarly is the case with regard to the proposal to construct building for Cannanore Training School also. The proposal to repair old buildings of the Kozhikode Headquarters Hospital also has not been taken up so far. My object in pointing out all these things is to impress on the Hon. Minister the need for implementing all schemes which have been sanctioned by the Government. With regard to the construction of a bridge over Kuppam river the Hon. Minister pointed out last time itself that he had called for tenders for undertaking the construction of the bridge. But, Sir, in 1952 also tenders have been called, but subsequently cancelled. Afterwards, no action was taken. Though the scheme is estimated to cost Rs. 7 lakhs and odd only Rs. 25,000 has been provided for in the Budget for the coming year. May I know from the Hon. Minister whether the scheme will be taken up this year at least? I hope that as far as the schemes concerning Malabar are concerned, they will be taken up this year and implemented without any further delay."

* SRI E. K. SANKARAVARMA RAJA :—" Sir, in respect of Demands XXIV and XXV—Civil Works, I have to bring to the notice of the Hon. the Minister for Public Works that most of the roads in North Malabar are in a very bad condition. As pointed out by hon. Member Sri T. C. Narayanan Nambiar, the work of constructing a bridge over Kuppam river should be taken up immediately this year itself.

" With regard to North Malabar areas and particularly with regard to my constituency I wish to make a few remarks. Sir, the Kuttiyadi ghat road between Badagara and Mananthody is a very important ghat road. The distance from Mananthody to Badagara (via) Kuttiyadi is about 44 miles and about 4½ miles of the ghat road has already been laid up by the villagers themselves. Along with the laying of the remainder portion of the road, three bridges have to be constructed. For one bridge at Thottipalam, the Government have to spend about a lakh. For the other two bridges, the Government may not have to spend large sums of money because plenty of rocks are available nearby required for the construction of the bridges and on both sides of the stream there are high rocks. People in that area want that the construction of these bridges and the laying of the ghat road should be taken up this year itself, and that too as early as possible. I hope the Hon. Minister will see to it that this work is taken up as early as possible either under the Five-Year Plan or under any other plan.

" I wish also to refer to the question of completing the earthwork on both sides of the Kallyamvalli Bridge as the old one is in a dilapidated condition. I request, Sir, that the earthwork may be taken up early by the Government either by acquisition of land nearby for taking earth or by some other means.

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1-20 p.m. "Some time back I wrote to the Transport Department for running a bus from Guruvayur to Ponnani (via) Chalaseri as derived by the public of Ponnani. That has not been possible because the road from Guravayur (via) Chalaseri according to by the Transport department has to be widened. But the widening work has to be done by the Public Works Department. I request the Hon. Minister to see that the widening of the road is done as early as possible so that the roundabout route (via) Thiruthala which is a circuitous one may be abandoned and passengers may save As. 8 per trip if the road mentioned above is put up. That may kindly be taken into immediate consideration of the Government."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM—" : I want only two minutes, Sir."

MR. SPEAKER :—" How much time the Hon. Minister wants? "

* THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" I will finish very quickly, Sir."

MR. SPEAKER :—" Then the hon. Member Sri Vinayakam may take five minutes."

SRI K. VINAYAKAM :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not propose to expatiate on this cut motion, but shall only deal with a few points as far as my constituency is concerned. There is the Buckingham Canal flowing from Madras down south, passing through Mahabalipuram. This canal carries away only salt water. Yearly, the silt is being removed from this canal by the Department, but the silt so removed from the canal is spread over the agricultural lands adjoining the canal and the agriculturists who own these lands have been incessantly complaining about this saltish silt that is spread on their lands and the consequent damage to crops. The department generally do not seem to take any interest and they do not even take care to look into their complaints. This is being repeated every year and the crops are destroyed. Even last year a representation was made through me to the Hon. Minister, but I do not think any action has been taken so far. At least this year, I request that necessary instructions may be issued to the officials concerned that they should respect the complaints of the agriculturists. It seems to me that they are of the opinion that the entire bund belongs to them. It may be that the bund belongs to that department and there is no objection if they deposit the silt on the bund. They think their job is over if they remove the silt and throw it anywhere. During rainy season what happens is after a heavy fall of rain, the silt on the bund is washed away into the fields and thus the havoc is done to the crops. I suggest that the level of the bund may be raised. When there is rise in water-level in the canal, the water overflows and it comes in contact with agricultural lands with the result that crops are affected. Therefore, I request necessary instructions may be issued to the department in this regard.

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" Then, there is the Cooum river. There emanates abnoxious smell from it. For flushing the Cooum water some irrigation research was conducted at Poondi. I have also seen the model there. It looks all right so far as the model is concerned. But in practice, what we find is the flushing of water from the sea into the Cooum has not removed the bad smell to any appreciable extent. Enquiries show that the model is quite O.K. but since the level of Cooum river is too high, there is difficulty in flshing sufficient water from the sea with the result the obnoxious odour could not be got rid off. So what is required is that the Cooum river should be deepened for flushing sea water in larger quantities. This could not be attended by the Corporation. It is not their property. It is the Government who have to do this."

* THE HON. SRI R. SHANMUGA RAJESWARA SETHUPATHI :—" Mr. Speaker, Sir, Mr. Nambiar while talking on his cut motion has mentioned specially about the economic backwardness of certain areas in Malabar. Well, I do not want to go into the details of the various places mentioned by him. But if economic conditions are going to be the criterion, I may assure the hon. Member that Malabar will get the first place and as such he need not worry.

" He referred to the provision made by the Government of India for development of roads of inter-State importance. He was mentioning about Thaliparamba, Erukkur and various other places. I would like to assure him that it will all be remembered and Malabar will certainly get due representation, not at the cost of other places that are not spoken of here in view of the shortness of time; all the places will be served according to their needs.

" Then, Sir, the bruing question with reference to this Demand has always been the poor pay, emoluments and service conditions of the work-charged establishment and regularizing their services. It has been a very vital question and I entirely sympathise with that. My heart is with them and I want to do something for them, but then finance is standing in our way. But I hope a time will come when we could solve that. I am not trying to defend what we are doing just now. We know it is a very vital question and our attention is already focussed on it. It is certain that we will be able to do something, if not this year, at least in the next Budget. I am sure that I will be able to move my Colleague to tackle this problem and I hope also that our financial position will be better by that time, so that he won't turn a deaf ear.

" Then reference was made to motor boats and their staff. It was stated that their pay was lowered and they were kept in an insanitary condition. I shall certainly call for an inspection to be made. I cannot understand why their pay which was at Rs. 18 has gone down to Rs. 15 according to the hon. Member.

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It is very wrong and if it had happened, I shall certainly cause an investigation to be made and try to restore, if not add anything more.

" Then an hon. Member referred to the tolls also in certain places and how it has been causing a lot of inconvenience, especially in cases of certain maternity cases and so on. I do not know how it has been charged and I am sorry for that. I shall have it looked into and shall have it examined.

" Then with regard to the Kuppam Bridge, I must say that the delay was not due to us. There has been a very controvercial issue going on with reference to alignment of the West Coast road and we had to wait till that was settled . . ."

1–30 p.m. MR. SPEAKER :—" It is now half-past one of the clock. I am going to guillotine the remaining Demands.

" It being half-past one of the clock, Mr. Speaker, proceeded pursuant to the Assembly Rules to put forth the questions on the cut motions and the Demands under discussion and then successively put forth the questions on the other Demands, notice of which had been given by Government. The question is—

' That the allotment of Rs. 4,83,56,700 under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works be reduced by Rs. 100.' "

The cut motion was put and lost.

MR. SPEAKER :—" The question is—

' That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 4,83,56,700 under Demand XXIV—Civil Works—Works.' "

The Demand was put and carried and the Grant was made.

MR. SPEAKER :—" The question is—

' That the allotment of Rs. 1,24,56,100 under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishment and Tools and Plant be reduced by Rs. 100.' "

The motion was put and lost.

MR. SPEAKER :—" The question is—

' That the Government be granted a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,24,56,100 under Demand XXV—Civil Works—Establishments and Tools and Plant.' "

The Demand was put and carried and the Grant was made.